



History Today

School of History Newsletter

Dear Friends

Welcome back to the summer term! It's wonderful that finally the sun is out in Canterbury. But the good weather means that the academic year is fast reaching its conclusion. In order to mark the end of the year and celebrate our successes, the inaugural School of History dinner takes place on 18th May in Rutherford Dining Hall. Get your ticket at <https://store.kent.ac.uk/product-catalogue/faculty-of-humanities/school-of-history/events/school-of-history-formal-dinner-ticket>

A recent success was our submission for an Athena Swan Bronze award (under the leadership of Amy Blakeway and Emily Manktelow.) This is excellent news and the School now embarks on implementing the gender equality action plan. More in the next newsletter on this! In this edition of the newsletter you can read about the successful study trip to Milan (pp.2/3), events of interest to our postgraduates including a conference, a festival and a funded scholarship (pp.4/5) and a report by the School's Union Rep on the industrial action that saw large numbers of academics across campus out on the picket lines last term protesting against cuts to pensions.

Best wishes,

Juliette

Dr Juliette Pattinson

Head of the School of History

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Milan Field Trip - April, 2018

Written by: Gregory Cooper, Jack Davis, Maria Edwards, George Evans-Hulme, Max Nunn, Katie Slane, Gemma Steer.

Edited by: George Evans-Hulme

I had been looking forward to this trip since we first received the module handbook for the Napoleon special subject back in the summer of 2017, and this feeling of anticipation only strengthened as we stood waiting for our coach outside Rutherford College at 4am under a light rain. The journey to Italy went smoothly and we arrived in Milan in the late morning. The main activity that day encompassed a leisurely walking tour of the city. Our first stop was the neoclassical Arco della Pace (Arch of Peace), initially constructed under Napoleonic rule in 1807 and completed in 1838. We then walked through the impressive Sforza Castle, which was built in the 15th century and was considered to be one of the largest citadels in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries. A brief stop for lunch was followed by the impressive Duomo (Cathedral) of Milan with its brilliant white marble façade dominating the surrounding square. After this, we took a stroll through the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, the world's oldest active shopping centre, which was completed in 1877. The walking tour of the city concluded with a glimpse of Italian poet Alessandro Manzoni's abode. We ended the day with a visit to the Milanese fashion district, and a visit to the Basilica of Sant'Ambrogio, where you can still see the remains of the saint himself in the crypt underneath the altar.

The next day we visited the historic city of Monza. After an easy train journey, it was only a short walk to the stunning Duomo, its unique architecture alone providing sufficient reason to warrant a visit. Our tour guide was knowledgeable and engaging, and offered a detailed history of Queen Theodelinda, the founder of the Duomo, as well as presenting an interesting insight into the pilfering nature of the Napoleonic regime. One rarely considers the subaltern perspective of those who have been robbed of their treasures by an imperial power, not least in a European context. But, with this being said, the treasury had retained ample artefacts from the period of late-antiquity all the way to present-day art. For me, one of the most instructive aspects of the trip was the comprehensive introduction to north-Italian history. This in turn provided us with the ability to expand the historical context in which we saw Napoleon and his Italian legacy. The most notable object within our tour of the museum was undoubtedly the Iron Crown of Monza. This phenomenal historical artefact holds unrivalled symbolic significance for Italian rulers and being able to view it in person was a once in a lifetime experience. Following this, we walked to the Villa Réale of Monza, which was the residence of Napoleon's stepson, Eugene de Beauharnais, during his time as Viceroy of Italy. The palace and grounds were spectacular, with the palace gardens being one of the largest walled gardens in Europe, it provided a multi-faceted experience, giving us the opportunity to learn about Napoleonic and Italian history, as well as an introduction to palatial architecture alongside a modern art exhibit, which was an unexpected surprise in several senses of the word! Following our educational tour at the Palace Réale we wandered leisurely back to the station, providing time to enjoy the stunning scenery and typical Italian architecture, past the 'Villa' of a little-known lecturer at the University of Kent. Overall, yet another wonderful day, the perfect combination of education and fun.



Milan Field Trip, April 2018



Our second day in Milan commenced with a trip to the Museum of the Risorgimento, which encompassed a large exhibition on Napoleon and his influence in Italy and the Italian unification, including the regalia which he wore at his coronation in the Duomo in 1805. This was followed by a visit to the Galleria di Arte Moderna, which was set in the beautiful Villa Belgiojoso Bonaparte (Eugene de Beauharnais' other palace), where we viewed many magnificent examples of Milanese art throughout the years. The day was concluded enjoying the Italian weather and chatting over drinks and snacks as we wound our way back to the hotel through the architectural gem that was central Milan.



Villa Réale of Monza

On our 4th day in Italy we began the day by catching an early and extremely fast train from Milan to Turin. After our tour round the Artillery Museum, we made our way to the Museo Nazionale del Risorgimento in the centre of the city, walking through one of the city's main and one of my favourite squares, the Piazza San Carlo, which featured some stunning buildings and a statue of Emmanuel Philibert, the Duke of Savoy in the centre. At the Risorgimento museum, we were taken on a guided tour by our lovely tour guide Giulia, who highlighted the most important artefacts and paintings held by the museum. My favourite parts of the museum were the amazing ceiling paintings, the paintings that almost reached the ceiling and seeing the parliament of Turin. After some pizza and gelato (of course), we went on a walking tour around the central square of Turin, the Piazza Castello. We saw the monument to Italian general, Prince Emanuele Filiberto, Duke of Aosta, the Palazzo Madama and the Palazzo Reale, before strolling round the royal gardens. We then took a walk out to the Valentino castle of Turin, which was beautiful and where we had a lovely walk around the park and alongside the river before returning to Milan. The visit to Turin was lovely and relaxed and it was great to see all beautiful buildings, squares and palaces – definitely one of my favourite days on the trip!

The trip was certainly not lacking in its military history component. Indeed, upon our arrival in Milan we were treated to the impressive medieval citadel at the heart of the city. Military history has a very prominent place in Italian history and there was no shortage of that on this trip. In the Risorgimento museums of both Milan and Turin the Italian Wars of Unification (as well as a surprisingly large emphasis on Napoleon's earlier conquest) were well detailed and had many interesting exhibitions and paintings. Particularly poignant was the exhibition on how the Milanese used barricades in the 1848 revolution to permanently expel the Austrians under General Radetzky. This definitely made the already historic streets of Milan even more striking to explore. The military history pièce de résistance came in Turin with the artillery museum. Despite being moved from the main museum to temporary storage in a Barracks the museum boasted an incredible collection of artillery, rifles, bayonets, armour etc. There was far too much to go through in just over an hour but our guide, a former RAF Pilot, certainly tried to squeeze it all in! Throughout the trip, Tim was always available to give witty insights into all the military aspects of Italian history and, dare I say, many of the history students enjoyed the military history aspects more than they had expected!

On the whole, the trip to Milan had a wonderful sense of balance to it, with a fantastic mix of history, culture and socialising. It was brilliant to explore the vibrant, historical yet distinctly contemporary Milan, and counterpoise that with days in Monza and, the more leisurely, Turin. The trip has inspired a newfound love for Italy amongst those who went, and many hope to return in the near future. Of course, as ever, the people on a trip will nearly always define it, and one of the best features of this excursion was that it successfully brought together a range of School of History students and faculty, from first year undergraduates to senior lecturers, in a social setting beyond the seminar room, an opportunity that all of us were glad to have. The students on the trip were some of the funniest, insightful and most enjoyable company we have experienced in our time at Kent. Yet without our trip leaders, Dr Caiani and Dr Bowman, none of this would be possible. This goes beyond mere organisation, which was meticulous, and extends to their guidance and sociability. They initiated a welcoming, thought-provoking and often downright hilarious environment for the students to enjoy and going round a museum with your lecturer makes it that much more engaging. The biggest thanks must go to them. In summary, it was a real privilege to experience such a wonderful location with such a great group of people. Thank you to the School of History for making it possible.

AHRC CDP Studentship with the National Maritime Museum

Project Title: The Royal Observatory, Greenwich, and its networks of support and influence, 1675-1742

We seek applications from outstanding postgraduate students for this collaborative doctoral award, starting in September 2018. This project aims to develop a new approach to the institutional history of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. Using the Observatory as a central hub, it proposes to explore the local, national and international networks of astronomy, practical mathematics, navigation, education, print and instrument making that supported its work and developing reputation. It will focus on the period of the first two Astronomers Royal, John Flamsteed and Edmond Halley, aiming to better understand the role, milieu and development of this key institution in its foundational years.

This research will draw on work on geographies of knowledge, material culture and book history in order to gain a fuller picture of contexts in which mathematical and instrumental knowledge was developed and used. The project will make use of a range of archival sources and object, book and image collections, especially those of the NMM.

The student will have the opportunity to enhance the Museum's cataloguing and interpretation within public programming and displays, and to feed into the development of plans for the 350th anniversary of the Royal Observatory (2025-26), which forms part of the NMM (collectively, with The Queen's House and Cutty Sark, known as Royal Museums Greenwich). They will also be able to contribute to Dr Higgitt's research project, Metropolitan Science: Places, Objects and Cultures of Knowledge and Practice in London, 1600-1800, in partnership with the Science Museum.

Criteria

Applicants should have: a First Class or Upper Second Class Honours degree in an appropriate discipline; a masters degree in an appropriate discipline, although applicants who do not hold a masters degree will be considered if they can demonstrate sustained and relevant experience and meet the criteria outlined in the AHRC guidelines.

Candidates must meet the AHRC's academic criteria and eligibility criteria: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions>

For further details, please contact Dr Rebekah Higgitt: R.Higgitt@kent.ac.uk

To apply for the scholarship please see the [Scholarships Website](#) Deadline: **21 May 2018**

PG Festival

Monday 18 June - Friday 22 June 2018

The Graduate School are delighted to announce that this year's Postgraduate Festival will kick start with a launch event on Monday 18 June at 12noon.

This year the Graduate School is hosting its 8th Postgraduate Festival. The Festival brings together the postgraduate community and recognises the excellence of research at Kent.

It provides a valuable opportunity for postgraduates to showcase their research, network and explore new connections amongst the PG and University community. It is also a chance to celebrate the diverse disciplines across our three faculties.

All postgraduate students are invited and welcome, as are professional and support staff working alongside postgraduate students. For more info and if you would like to get involved, please see [here](#).



South East Hub conference 2018

Registration is now open

We are very excited to announce that registration for the South East Hub Conference 2018 is now open, to be held on 19th June at the University of Kent. The conference will focus on the utility of the terms victims, perpetrators, bystanders and collaborators in history, and we have some fantastic talks lined up. The title of the paper that will be given by our keynote speaker, Professor Tim Cole, has now been confirmed as 'Perpetrators, victims and bystanders: Writing integrated histories and geographies'. We are very much looking forward to what promises to be a highly insightful day.

Please note that we have limited spaces for this conference, so we will be operating on a first come, first serve basis. Registration closes on the 18th of May, but will close before then if we reach attendee capacity. The registration link is [here](#)

If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact Kate and Ellis at southeasthub2018@outlook.com.



Victims, Perpetrators, Bystanders and Collaborators as historical concepts: Redundant labels, useful categorisations or somewhere in between?

University of Kent, Grimond Building – Tuesday 19th June 2018, 8:30am registration

Join us here at the University of Kent for the 2018 South East Hub, a PG/ECR conference which will focus on the themes of victims, perpetrators, bystanders and collaborators as historical concepts.

Despite this near universal application of the above terms, there has been surprisingly little critical evaluation of their conceptual utility amongst scholars. This conference aims to provide a forum for postgraduate students and early career researchers to begin to facilitate vital discussion as to the future of these often problematic concepts.

There will be 4 panels – (1) 'Accusation, Collaboration and Resistance', (2) 'The Victim Voice', (3) 'Simultaneous Categories' (4) 'Regimes and the Right'

Keynote to be delivered by Professor Tim Cole, University of Bristol, title TBA
Drinks reception to follow at approximately 6pm.

For more information contact Ellis Spicer or Kate Docking at southeasthub2018@outlook.com or via Twitter @SEHub2018

CHASE
Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England

University of Kent



The Zeebrugge Raid: Creating a Legend 11 May 2018

On St. George's Day, 1918, British forces raided the Belgian port of Zeebrugge. The intention of the raid was to hamper severely the German ability to use the port as a submarine base. German submarine warfare was a great worry to the Allies who were desperate to ensure the safety of their vital maritime communication links. At the time, the raid was presented to the British people as a spectacular example of British character and genius.

Gateways to the First World War is now launching a project to investigate the ways in which this famous event was presented to the British people using local and national newspapers and magazines as a source. Gateways to the FWW would like to recruit a team of volunteers to work with Professor Mark Connolly in exploring the stories related to the raid. This event will provide information about the project and how to get involved.

For more information about the event please visit: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-zeebrugge-raid-creating-a-legend-registration-44323702387.

How to volunteer or attend: please contact Zoë Denness at gateways@kent.ac.uk.

Far Cry 5: cults, radicalism and why this video game speaks to today's divided America

Expert in American cultural history, Dr John Wills published an article for The Conversation on 13 April on why new video FarCry5 speaks to today's divided America.

Please see the article [here](#).



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What was that strike all about?

By Professor Charlotte Sleight, UCU rep for the School of History

What do paid parental leave, a guaranteed minimum wage, health and safety in the workplace, a limit on working hours, paid sick leave and pensions have in common? The answer is that none of these benefits would have come about without the work of Trade Unions. Trade Unions came into existence in the nineteenth century, as workers realised that by sticking together they could put pressure on their employers to treat them better. Even the International Monetary Fund – far from a left-wing organisation – has published research showing that membership of trade unions correlates positively with greater economic equality in society: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2015/03/jaumotte.htm>

This year, members of the University and College Union (UCU) – lecturers and postgraduate students – voted to take industrial action to protect their pension entitlements. The proposed pension cuts were of the order of 30-50%, depending on the age of the employee. Under the proposals, new lecturers would typically enter the profession with a student debt of well over £50K; after 40 years' service they could expect to retire on a pension of around £10K. Poverty-level income for a household is currently defined by the UK government at around £16K.

With such stark numbers, it is unsurprising that 88% of UCU members voted for strike action. They reasoned that losing several days' pay was a good trade-off to protect hundreds of thousands of pounds in retirement.

Lecturers were not happy about disrupting students' education. But there were things for all of us to learn from the action – a different kind of education. First, we learned that collective action really does work. At the beginning of the dispute, lecturers were told that the changes were non-negotiable. After striking, we have gained a review of the changes and even the chance to question the 'problem' with the pension fund itself. Second, we have learned that the slide away from workers' rights and entitlements – the uberification of the economy – is not inevitable. What the lecturers won for themselves created waves around the trade union movement, strengthening for the time being teachers' and other public sector pensions – all common professional destinations for history graduates.

Lecturers are nervous about the terms of the post-strike agreement. The devil is in the detail. We shall find out in one year's time whether or not our pensions are really safe. Universities continue to claim that it is unsustainable to maintain the current pension arrangements. The reality is that universities *choose* what to spend their money – that is, students' money – on. If the government insisted on a reduction in student fees, for example, they would simply *have* to find a way to adjust their budgets. In recent years universities have invested in new buildings, reasoning that prospective students are attracted by these. My belief is that students are more interested in quality teaching and good relationships with staff. Let's work together to create a fair economy and a positive society for all of us.

The UCU continues to work hard to protect the many university teachers who currently work on precarious contracts. It is becoming common practice to hire young academics on nine or even six month contracts, allowing them no paid time to develop their research and publications, which they will need in order to obtain permanent lectureships. Other academics survive on what are, essentially, zero hours contracts: https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/7995/Precarious-work-in-higher-education-a-snapshot-of-insecure-contracts-and-institutional-attitudes-Apr-16/pdf/ucu_precariouscontract_hereport_apr16.pdf

Getting to Know You

Sam Crooks

Recruitment, Admissions and Communications Administrator

Describe your role within the school

I'm the Recruitment, Admissions and Communications Administrator, and I've just returned from a year off on maternity leave after having my little girl. My role involves the promotion of the School and its courses to potential applicants. As part of this I organise all our recruitment events such as Applicant and Open Days, ensuring we put on events that will make visitors want to apply to study with us. I also recruit and manage our Student Ambassadors, who assist me at these events.

In addition I manage the school's social media channels, produce our promotional materials and internal and external communications, consider all applications we receive, deal with the Clearing process in the Summer, and arrange Outreach events – hopefully inspiring school students to aspire to go on to high education.

Tell us about your career so far

I studied both a BA English and American Literature and MA Multimedia Journalism at Kent, and then spent two years working as Communications Officer at a college in Broadstairs, before seeing this position come up and applying for it. I remember thinking it was perfect for me, so I was over the moon when I got it! I've now been here four years and have loved developing the role into what it is today.

What's your favourite part of your job?

There's so many different elements to this job that I love! Although they're stressful I always enjoy working our Open and Applicant Days, as there's something so exciting about being one of the first people an applicant meets on their first visit to the University. You can always tell when someone's falling in love with Kent like I did on my first visit, so to see someone go through the application process, and end up studying with us is so rewarding. I also really like the less glamorous statistical side of things too – for example I love tracking our conversion rates to see what's worked for us with different events.

If you have a news item, an upcoming event, or simply an idea for something you'd like to see in the next issue of this newsletter, please get in touch with Valeria Radu on v.radu@kent.ac.uk



Tell us an interesting fact about yourself:

I once entered a sandcastle competition judged by the Chuckle Brothers. I didn't win, but they did sign a Frisbee for me which was my prized possession as a child!

Where's your favourite place in the world?

I absolutely love the USA. Even though I've only been to a handful of states, they were all so different. New York was my absolute favourite, but I also loved Clearwater in Florida where we spent our honeymoon, and San Francisco was beautiful too. Nashville and Las Vegas are next on my bucket list!

What's your favourite book?

The only book I seem to have time for lately is The Very Hungry Caterpillar - but when I do get a spare five minutes I love classic murder mysteries and have been collecting the British Library Crime Classics. You can't go wrong with a good old Agatha Christie in my opinion!

What's your favourite film?

It's so hard to pick one, but I love anything with Tom Hanks – Forrest Gump (and Toy Story!) are my go-to's on a rainy day.